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Police Organisation Models for Combat Against Organised Crime and Terrorism - Italy and Great Britain

24. march 2004. - Occasional paper No.8

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There are different models of intelligence activities and repression used against organised crime in Europe, some of them having been an example for specialised structures of crime control in the region of Southeast Europe. Probably most efficient ones are those developed in Italy and, methodologically totally different – structures in Great Britain. Namely, these countries have almost completely different philosophies and use different institutional mechanisms to control crime but still they are both rather successful in combat against these security threats. The structure and basic characteristics of Italian Antimafia Investigation Department (DIA — Direzione Investigativa Antimafia) and British National Crime Squad will be briefly presented here. These two organisations use the system of measures, means and ideas which give enough basis for understanding modern system of combat new threats against "soft security", first of all organised crime and terrorism in Europe, as well as for developing a model which could be feasible in Southeast Europe.

Direzione Investigativa Antimafia — DIA

Investigation Department for combat against Mafia is a specialised service, organised within Italian Interior Ministry and its exclusive mandate is to carry out preventive investigations, in connection with the organised crime. DIA is formally authorised to carry out all formal investigations of crimes connected with Italian Mafia, which is – clearly, its basic field of interest. The service consists of 1,500 units, whose members are recruited equally from the national police, carabinieri and the units of financial police, which in Italy is equivalent to "police for business crime" in police structures in Southeast European countries^[1].

Fundamental elements of the DIA investigative strategy are directed to its basic task, which is to prevent development of mafia type of organised crime, through collecting, analyses and operative use of intelligence material, as well as through coordinated work of other agencies for crime control. This strategy strongly stresses the analytical work and the concept of long-term collecting information. DIA concentrates on "learning more about the enemy", first of all through learning about subjects of security interest (criminal organisations, rather than single crimes) so its actions do not respond to particular charges, which is usual way for activating conventional police structure, but are carried out in order to estimate the security threats and predict trends and possible future activities of criminal groups. This philosophy of the police work is fundamentally different from the usual "police mentality", which is often reduced to strictly normative way of thinking, according to which police should act only if a crime has been committed and when required by the law. Although DIA cooperates closely with the police in uniforms, its mission is more alike an intelligence service mission than a classic agency for combat against crime. However, the results achieved by this organisation since 1992 when it was established, are impressive.

Speaking about its structure, DIA has a director and two deputies – one for operative activities and the other for administrative work. There are one central office and several local ones, which support the work of three operative groups, which are: (a) preventive investigations, (b) criminal investigations and (c) international coordination. It is important to say that in the most of the West European systems, police carries out the investigation in cooperation with prosecutor, so "investigation" is in the mandate of police structures, while the situation in Serbia and Montenegro is different – police carries out so-called "pre-investigation activities", and the investigation is carried out by investigative judge. There are ideas that the judiciary system of Serbia should be changed so the solutions enabling the prosecutor and police to carry out investigations should be taken over.

DIA has 12 field offices and 7 so-called "resident offices" all over Italian territory. However, it is interesting that the offices have no territorial jurisdiction themselves since their goal is exclusively to enhance operative mobility and flexibility of DIA teams in particular regions of Italy so they act as local platforms for the DIA teams' operations and not as separate administrative units within DIA with their own and exclusive competencies for operating in their regions. This brought significant progress against traditional problem of mutual competition and rivalry between particular organisational and territorial units of the same service, while at the same time maximum of operative activity is achieved for any DIA team in any part of Italian territory.

Some of the important results achieved by DIA include the solved cases of murder – of Italian member of Parliament Salvo Lima in 1992 and Ligato, former president of Italian Railways. Only one year later, in 1993, DIA members solved the case known as "Capaci bombing", in which the judges Falcone and Morvillo, as well as their three police bodyguards, had been killed. These cases were solved thanks to the wiretapped telephone conversations between two high-ranked mafia members, which enabled DIA to get important information about the plans of the group they followed and about internal structure and organisation of Cosa Nostra.

One of the most important arrests DIA completed were the arrests of Leoluca Bagarella, well known chief of Sicilian Cosa Nostra, in Palermo in 1995. Bagarella has been fugitive since 1991. After that, DIA arrested Giuseppe Buffa, high-ranking member of Palermo-based Mafia family San Lorenzo, as well as Natale Rosmini, chief of Rozmini family from Calabria. Both have been fugitives from justice for several years. In 1998, DIA arrested Francesco Schiavone, alias "Sandokan", who run criminal clan "Casalesi" out of his high-tech equipped shelter and who was considered to be "number one" fugitive from justice. Closer to the Southeast Europe, DIA destroyed several smugglers' groups from Puglia in 1998. Those groups were strongly connected with Russian, Montenegrin and Albanian groups over the Adriatic. Italian services considered Albanian groups to be particularly dangerous, due to their affinity to large calibre military weapons and due to their intensive connections with Italian Mafia. Besides, DIA paid special attention to the security threats directed from Albanian criminal groups against Italy and therefore it established a special Organised Crime Observatory in Albania, aimed to follow the development and dynamics of organised crime in Albania itself. Therefore, DIA became an example of the way efficient special units can be formed in the states of Southeast Europe so some of the countries in the region established the same structures in the past few years.^[2]

British National Crime Squad

Specialist nature of the British National Crime Squad is based upon partly different concept of "a special unit" in the British system of crime control, compared to the one that characterises continental European police structure. In the latter, the fact that a unit is specialized or special usually means it is specially trained to combat against a special kind of crime and that it is specially equipped to perform extremely demanding and difficult operations. In British system, specialisation includes stronger emphasis on the analytics and collecting special knowledge and experiences of existing police formations although

here some elements of special additional training and equipment also exist.[3]

British police consists of 56 local police forces, each of them including a special unit for combat against organised crime and terrorism, and of six Regional Crime Squads for England and Wales. National police structure is "the weakest one" and it considerably counts on the resources of local and regional police forces. National Crime Squad was formed in 1998, joining criminal units of all the six regional police forces. Recruiting is based on collection of existing special human and other resources, instead of forming completely new, specially trained structures. This creates the situation completely different from the one in Southeast European countries and even from those in continental West European states, in which the criminal police is isolated – in a great deal, from the new, specially trained special structure for combat against terrorism and organised crime, which often have an elite position, compared to the traditional services of criminal police. In Great Britain, criminal police provides basis for recruiting members of special units. National Crime Squad has about 1450 detectives or operatives and all detectives are recruited out of local police forces that additionally strengthen the integrity and participation withing complete British police structure.

National Crime Squad has a central headquarters in London and 44 offices all around Great Britain, similar to the territorial organisation of DIA, therefore without any territorial jurisdiction for local offices. The Squad has about 380 employees in the support sector, it is based upon "thin" organisational structure aimed to avoid double structures and functions, which enables cost reduction, clearer and simpler lines of command and coordination, higher salaries and better work conditions, clearer organisational responsibility and mission, as well as stronger stability of jobs for all the member.

Basic mission of the Squad is to combat against "serious and organised crime", in cooperation with other control agencies in Great Britain and abroad. Such a formulation of the mission suggests a special understanding of the notion – organised crime, connected to the term "serious crime". In this context, the notion "serious crime" suggests structurally and longitudinally serious crime, in the sense of those kinds of crime which make a structural threat and which are capable of independent reproduction. Therefore, the notion of "serious crime", in the British system, totally different from the notion of "serious crime" in the meaning used by the most of continental European police structures and judicial systems. In continental Europe, "seriousness" of the crime is understood, first of all, correspondingly to the gravity of the crimes resulting from such criminal activity, while the gravity of a crime is usually estimated in practise according to severeness of the punishment prescribed by the criminal law for that crime. The most severe punishments are, generally, prescribed for the most dramatic crimes, characterised by the high level of violence, so in the Continent the most violent crimes would be considered as the most serious ones. On the other side, in the British police system, the philosophy behind the phrase "serious and organised crime" means emphasise is on the structural complexity of the crime and the level of difficulties in solving the criminal case, and not on the violent or dramatic nature of the case. Therefore, the vocabulary used in formulating the mission of National Crime Squad may appear to be voluntarily chosen, from the point of view of the Continental criminology and it may look like the result of confusion between two different things – serious crime (grave crimes) and organised crime.

Organised crime is different because it is not primarily connected to the manner of committing a crime, since those crimes that do not belong to the very notion of organised crime may be "marked" by "organised" manner. The very essence of the notion is connection to the fact that there is a crime organisation as an entity that is behind the committed crimes, not the organised manner of committing a crime itself. It is possible to commit robbery which reveals the detailed organisation of the crime and still, in most of cases, this would not be an act of organised crime but so-called "classic crime". There are also many "serious crimes", according to the Continental standards described above which do not belong to organised crime but there are also crimes which would not be considered as particularly "serious", according to the very same criteria but still belong to organised crime, in the light of more or less complex criminal structures which are behind these crimes and the manner they had been planned and committed. This fine difference should be kept in mind in order to understand the official formulation of the mission of National Crime Squad.

The notion of "seriousness" that is used in the British model of police organisation and philosophy stimulates longitudinal operations and planning of the policy against organised crime on the scientific basis, while the notion of "seriousness" used in the Continental model of police primarily tends to achieve "the bang effect", which is the effect in the public, through dramatic police operations. It strengthens the citizens' control by stimulating the feeling that in certain moments significant results have been achieved, in the concrete, provable and efficient way. While the second approach has perhaps better effects in strengthening control and confidence in public security in shorter terms, the first one is more useful in long-term perspective since it gives the citizens more stable feeling of being protected by permanently active structure which follows security situation in every moment, although it does not insist on single dramatic actions. This is the second important difference between operative philosophies of security systems in Great Britain and in the continental part of Europe.

British approach cultivates the development of the intelligence as the core of security system. Official position of the British Interior Ministry (The Home Office) is that "reliable processing reliable intelligence material is the basis of complete police work". This thesis, which would be considered as oversimplification in the Continental police systems, still contributed to the development of the police model which enabled British police to solve numerous cases which are usually presented as so called "black figure" of the criminal (committed crimes which have not been reported or not been discovered, therefore not been shown in official statistics on the rate – in fact, "the black figure" is the remainder between official image of public security and the real deficit of security in any society).

The approach taken toward the crime control, based on the police work primarily oriented to intelligence requires well developed analytical dimension of the police structure, in which analytics is understood as "the way of organising and interpreting intelligence material in the way that significantly enhance the (cognitive) value of the material and the probability of success in the combat against organised crime".^[4] However, analytics is a very expensive part of police work, since it requires relatively high level of expertise as well as the headquarter organisation of the police structure which resembles military hierarchy. However, this organisation makes police look completely like "civil" and "civilian" one and cause no association of a military organisation. While its appearance is "friendly" to the citizens' community, the structure behind "a policeman in the street" is based on planning and command of military type, while police officers and analysts are on the top, many of whom are not policemen by their training and authority. The emphasis on the intelligence and analytics also has concrete consequences for "the policeman in the street", because greater individual initiatives are encouraged in such a surrounding and greater are the possibilities for promotion (for example, through training and education), and the police service is more democratic – the policy of the service is formulated through participation and consultation, based on higher expertise and experience. One of good consequences of this type of police organisation is lower level of repressive spirit within police itself. Therefore, it can be concluded that, although the model of combat against organised crime based on intelligence and analytics requires "tower structure" of hierarchical planning and commanding of military type, since the analytical product needs to be filtrated down the hierarchy structure and command line, it creates the atmosphere within that "tower-structure" which is more "civilian" and creative than it is in some other police structures which, at the first sight, appear to be less hierarchically organised..

Within the British National Crime Squad, intelligence units are connected to Operative Areas and Operative Branches, where each intelligence unit has its own analytical unit and a financial police unit, meaning a unit for business crime since this kind of crime is considered to follow most types of organised crime. Hierarchy of the analytical service corresponds to the organisational level at which a concrete unit operates. At lower levels, which mainly included "field operations", analytics is very concrete and deals with intelligence material that is corresponding to the concrete tasks of the unit and everyday police investigations.

Methodologically speaking, analytics is divided into strategic and tactic ones, while the former deals with identifying and predicting development of trends in activities of criminal organisations and structures, as well as studying particularly relevant problems such as development of narco cartels or human trafficking. Tactic analysis deals with committed crimes and identified activities of criminal organisations, following the investigations and processed cases. The priorities in strategic analysis done by National Crime Squad are as follows:

1. analysis of criminal groups' capacities to carry out organised crime activities and activities connected with serious crime;
2. study of particular fields of most probable security threat;
3. study of general trends in development of criminal groups' activities;
4. analysis and prediction of specific intentions of criminal groups;
5. infiltration into criminal groups down the security structures, with the lowest levels of intelligence network, while undisturbed flow of information up the police structure and feedback down as the result of analysis and interpretation of the information are secured.

Specifically, priority 5 means that infiltration into a criminal group will typically be carried out at the lowest level of the intelligence organisation, that is by the operative agents, while the criminal group will be simply opened at the lower level. At the same time, the procedure of infiltration and intelligence activity is designed to allow undisturbed flow of the collected intelligence information from an agent through the intelligence structure up to the top of the analytical "tower" and to allow the feedback to the level of agent, as much undisturbed as possible, in order to allow usage of the information in particular cases, for the agent's safety or for better efficiency in collecting intelligence material.

The Squad is primarily involved in preventive activities, not repressive ones. All operative and intelligence teams have their own analysts, and predictive and preventive investigations are carried out at national and international level, through bilateral cooperation with police of other countries, participation in Europol and Interpol activities and through other forms of multilateral police cooperation. Predictive approach means intelligence and analytical activities are directed, above all, toward predicting future criminal activities and attempts to prevent them, rather than to react to committed crimes and performing standard police job, which is mainly the task of local police force.

Application of the models presented here in short is one of the reform issues for Serbian police, within the reform, which is being carried out. European Agency for Reconstruction located 11 million euros for police reform and the process will be supervised by a British police expert, which is – generally speaking, promising that the British models of police work, which appear to be more creative than the Continental models, will be more applied.

[1] www.interno.it/dip_ps/dia

[2] For example, Serbian Interior Ministry established new Department for Combat against Organised Crime — UBPOK, which soon became elite part of the whole Serbian police. This Department is similar to DIA in several aspects and DIA operations were used as models in training of UBPOK.

[3] www.nationalcrimesquad.police.uk

[4] Formulation taken from the official documents of the National Crime Squad.

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